

# Drug Enforcement Administration Practitioner's Manual

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## Message from the Administrator

The Drug Enforcement Administration is pleased to provide this updated edition of the 1990 Practitioner's Manual to assist you in understanding your responsibilities under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) and its implementing regulations. This manual will help answer questions that you may encounter in your practice and provide guidance in complying with federal requirements.

DEA remains committed to the 2001 Balanced Policy of promoting pain relief and preventing abuse of pain medications. In enforcing the CSA, it is DEA's responsibility to ensure drugs are not diverted for illicit purposes. Unfortunately, this country is now experiencing an alarming prescription drug abuse problem:

- Today, more than 6 million Americans are abusing prescription drugs—that is more than the number of Americans abusing cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, and inhalants, combined.
- Researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that opioid prescription painkillers now cause more drug overdose deaths than cocaine and heroin combined.
- Today more new drug users have begun abusing pain relievers (2.4 million) than marijuana (2.1 million) or cocaine (1.0 million).

It is more important now than ever to be vigilant in preventing the diversion and abuse of controlled substances. This manual will help you do that by listing some safeguards you can take to prevent such diversion. It also explains registration, recordkeeping, and valid prescription requirements.

As a practitioner, your role in the proper prescribing, administering, and dispensing of controlled substances is critical to patients' health and to safeguarding society against the diversion of controlled substances. DEA is committed to working jointly with the medical community to ensure that those in need are cared for and that legitimate controlled substances are not being diverted for illegal use.

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Administrator  
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